Government of Saskatchewan

Annual Report 2000-01

Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management

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Saskatchewan
Environment
and Resource
Management

SERM

2000-01 Annual Report

For the fiscal year April 1, 2000 to March 31, 2001

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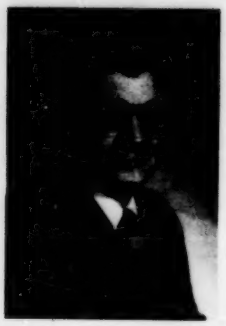
LETTERS OF TRANSMITTAL



The Honourable Lynda Haverstock
Lieutenant Governor
Province of Saskatchewan

Your Honour:

As Minister for the Department of Environment and Resource Management, it is my pleasure to submit our Annual Report for the year ended March 31, 2001.

Respectfully submitted,

Buckley Belanger
Minister

The Honourable Buckley Belanger
Minister of Environment and Resource Management

Dear Sir:

I respectfully submit to you the Annual Report for the Department of Environment and Resource Management (SERM) for the year ending March 31, 2001.

The 2000-01 Annual Report describes SERM's goals and objectives. It details our actions - how we went about managing and protecting Saskatchewan's natural and environmental resources for health, social and economic purposes, and to ensure they are sustained for future generations. The report identifies key risk strategies - the factors that affect SERM's success and how the department plans to manage these risks. The financial overview details how SERM manages its fiscal responsibilities.

SERM welcomes the opportunity to report on the department's actions and accomplishments. It is my hope that this document will be a useful aid to understand how SERM contributes to Saskatchewan's appeal as a desirable place to live, work, visit and invest.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart Kramer
Deputy Minister

Department Overview

Vision

A high quality environment and healthy ecosystems in perpetuity, which sustain social, health and economic well-being for Saskatchewan citizens.

Mandate

SERM carries the provincial responsibility to manage, enhance, and protect Saskatchewan's natural and environmental resources for conservation, social, economic, and recreation purposes, and to ensure they are sustained for future generations.

We focus on:

- protecting primary resources including air, water, and soil using regulatory and non-regulatory controls;
- managing and protecting natural resources including forests, fish, wildlife, lands, parks, and their natural and cultural resources, in such a way as to ensure their sustainability and biological diversity;
- assess, regulate, minimize and mitigate the impact of alterations to the natural environment by development activities through implementation of the environmental impact assessment program;
- maximize economic and social benefits from renewable resources and programs while maintaining resource sustainability;
- promote public, stakeholder and Aboriginal peoples' involvement in environmental and resource management through developing and enhancing public involvement programs and partnerships;
- promote respect and a sense of stewardship for the environment and its natural, recreational and cultural resources through interpretive programs, partnerships, and informational materials; and
- cooperate in the development of inter-jurisdictional, national and global initiatives aimed at enhancing environmental and resource conservation and management.

ORGANIZATION

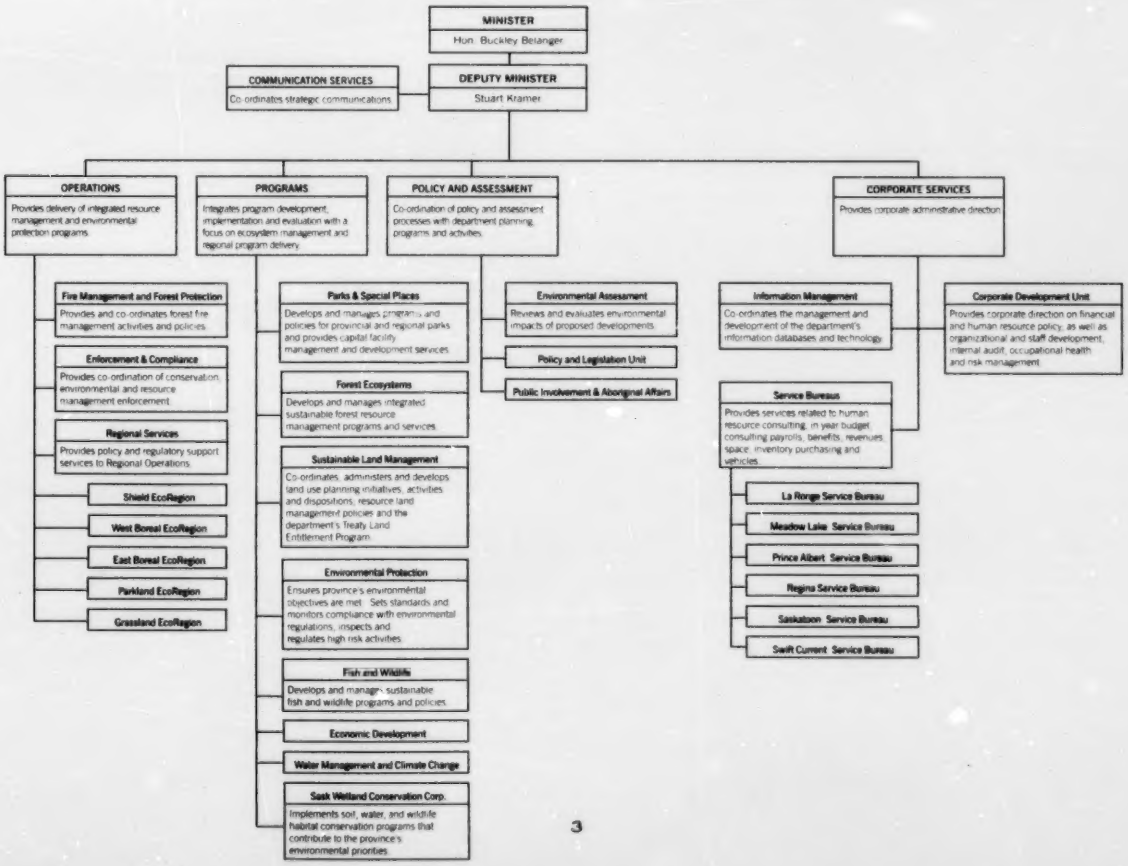
Operations Division is the program delivery or "operations" arm of the department. Operations Division provides regional planning and delivery of the department's programs and services. Operations Division is comprised of three branches - Enforcement and Compliance, Fire Management and Forest Protection, and Regional Services - and five EcoRegions (Grassland, Parkland, East Boreal, West Boreal, Shield) that deliver SERM's field operations. EcoRegions are based on natural ecological characteristics. This structure enables SERM to deliver integrated resource management and environmental protection programs while tailoring activities to meet the unique needs of the region.

Corporate Services Division provides strategic and operational financial, human resources, and information management support to the department. There are six Service Bureaus (Regina, Prince Albert, Swift Current, Meadow Lake, Saskatoon and La Ronge). Service Bureaus provide operational support to the entire department in: human resources, financial and property management services, general administration and program support, as well as other functions associated with central government agencies, e.g., SPMC, Finance, PSC. The Corporate Development Unit is responsible for developing strategic plans and policies related to corporate-level planning, finances, organizational development and human resource work. An Information Management Branch provides information management services and information technology maintenance and development services.

Communication Services Branch delivers strategic communications to: shape the department's image, increase participation in department programs and environmental stewardship, facilitate information exchange within the department, and to facilitate public and stakeholder input in the development of policies and programs. The branch is composed of Public and Media Services Unit, Production Services Unit and the Inquiry Distribution Centre.

Policy and Assessment Division integrates and coordinates key functions, policies and activities across the department, including: 1) coordinating strategic planning, policy and legislative processes, 2) public involvement and aboriginal liaison policies and processes, 3) environmental impact assessment and 4) ecosystem-based management planning. The Division includes Environmental Assessment Branch, Policy and Legislation Unit, and Public Involvement and Aboriginal Affairs Unit.

Programs Division develops and coordinates the planning, implementation and evaluation of environmental and resource management policies, programs and legislation. Programs Division is made up of the following branches: Environmental Protection, Fish and Wildlife, Forest Ecosystems, Parks and Special Places, Sustainable Land Management, Water Management and Climate Change, and Economic Development.


MINISTER
Hon. Buckley Belanger
COMMUNICATION SERVICES
Co-ordinates strategic communications
DEPUTY MINISTER
Stuart Kramer
OPERATIONS
Provides delivery of integrated resource management and environmental protection programs
PROGRAMS
Integrates program development, implementation and evaluation with a focus on ecosystem management and regional program delivery
POLICY AND ASSESSMENT
Co-ordination of policy and assessment processes with department planning, programs and activities
CORPORATE SERVICES
Provides corporate administrative direction
Fire Management and Forest Protection
Provides and co-ordinates forest fire management activities and policies
Enforcement & Compliance
Provides co-ordination of conservation, environmental and resource management enforcement
Regional Services
Provides policy and regulatory support services to Regional Operations
Shield EcoRegion
West Boreal EcoRegion
East Boreal EcoRegion
Parkland EcoRegion
Grassland EcoRegion
Parks & Special Places
Develops and manages programs and policies for provincial and regional parks and provides capital facility management and development services
Forest Ecosystems
Develops and manages integrated sustainable forest resource management programs and services
Sustainable Land Management
Co-ordinates, administers and develops land use planning initiatives, activities and dispositions, resource land management policies and the department's Treaty Land Entitlement Program
Environmental Protection
Ensures province's environmental objectives are met. Sets standards and monitors compliance with environmental regulations, inspects and regulates high risk activities
Fish and Wildlife
Develops and manages sustainable fish and wildlife programs and policies
Economic Development
Water Management and Climate Change
Sask Wetland Conservation Corp.
Implements soil, water, and wildlife habitat conservation programs that contribute to the province's environmental priorities
Environmental Assessment
Reviews and evaluates environmental impacts of proposed developments
Policy and Legislation Unit
Public Involvement & Aboriginal Affairs
Information Management
Co-ordinates the management and development of the department's information databases and technology
Service Bureaus
Provides services related to human resource consulting, in year budget consulting, payrolls, benefits, revenues, space, inventory purchasing and vehicles
La Ronge Service Bureau
Meadow Lake Service Bureau
Prince Albert Service Bureau
Regina Service Bureau
Saskatoon Service Bureau
Swift Current Service Bureau
Corporate Development Unit
Provides corporate direction on financial and human resource policy, as well as organizational and staff development, internal audit, occupational health and risk management

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The 2000-01 Fiscal Year in Review

This Annual Report is offered to government, our stakeholders, staff, clients and the public to describe activities that contributed to our goals and objectives.

SERM's Core Goals and Objectives

Core Goal	Objectives
I Ensure a Clean and Healthy Environment	1. Clean Water 2. Clean Air 3. Clean Land 4. Minimize Impact of Wildland Fires on Values at Risk (e.g. people, property and natural resources)
II Protect Ecosystem Health and Maintain Natural Abundance of Renewable Resources	5. Protect Endangered Wild Species and Habitat Areas within all Provincial EcoRegions on Lands under SERM's Management (e.g. Forest and Crown Resource Lands) 6. Protect Biodiversity, Natural Habitats and Ecosytem Health Across the Provincial Landscapes
III Provide Fair Opportunity for Sustainable Use, Development and Enjoyment of Natural Renewable Resources	7. Ensure Equitable Allocation of Fish, Wildlife, Forests and SERM's Crown Resource Lands 8. Provide Saskatchewan Citizens Accessible Recreation and Educational Opportunities on Provincial Park and Crown Resource Lands 9. Increase Economic Benefits Based on Sustainable Use and Development of Forest, Parks, Crown Resource Lands, Fish and Wildlife Resources 10. First Nations and Metis Constitutional Rights to Fish and Wildlife and their Interests in the Use of Other Natural Renewable Resources are met through Cooperative Means

Goal 1: A Clean and Healthy Environment

Objective 1

Clean Water

Key actions in support of Objective 1

1. SERM ensured all major new developments complied with provincial water quality standards and that the public was consulted before project approval (environmental assessment). EcoRegion staff worked with Saskatchewan communities to ensure compliance with SERM's regulations, with special attention paid to communities that did not meet minimum treatment standards. Enhanced community awareness translated into increased water sampling and plans to upgrade water treatment in many communities.

2. The department monitored effluent quality from municipal, industrial, commercial, and agricultural facilities to ensure acceptable water quality:
   - SERM and Saskatchewan Health increased inspections of public drinking water systems. Procedures for quicker response and action when potentially hazardous samples are found were developed.
   - SERM worked with the town of Vanguard on a water treatment upset following a major rainstorm.
   - Important precedent was established with Grassland EcoRegion's successful efforts to eliminate the discharge of inadequately treated effluent into Swift Current Creek.
   - Major groundwater leaks into Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park's sewage system were located and corrected to prevent sewage effluent leakage into the surrounding substrate.
   - Staff worked with Saskatchewan Health to address non-compliant sewage holding tanks in Duck Mountain, Moose Mountain and Pike Lake provincial parks.

3. Water pollution and waterworks regulations were amended to require all SERM-regulated facilities to have certified operators running water and wastewater facilities in Saskatchewan. To obtain certification, operators must meet requirements established in the Water and Wastewater Certification Standards (details are available from http://www.serm.gov.sk.ca/environment/protection/standards.pdf).

4. SERM co-chairs a committee established to implement the Water Management Framework. SERM leads 13 and co-leads seven of the Framework's 58 recommended actions to ensure safe and reliable water supplies within healthy and diverse aquatic ecosystems:
   - SERM, Sask Water, Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan, Partners For the Saskatchewan River Basin, Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Association, Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation and the Federal Government (i.e. Fisheries and Oceans, Environment Canada) formed the Saskatchewan Watershed Stewardship Network to coordinate and support watershed stewardship activities in the province and foster public involvement in management and protection of watersheds.
   - The role and reporting function of Water Appeal Board was clarified.
   - A process to streamline the approval for licencing water-related projects was approved and became effective on April 1, 2001. The new process is more responsive to clients, minimizes delay and confusion and is more effective.
   - SERM, SaskPower, Sask Water and Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) consulted with stakeholders to determine the environmental impacts of hydro operations in the Saskatchewan River, including affected wildlife species such as piping plovers (in Lake Diefenbaker), walleye (in Tobin Lake) and lake sturgeon in the Saskatchewan River in the Cumberland area.
   - SERM worked with Sask Water (the lead agency) to develop provincial legislation to help prevent bulk export of water; new legislation is expected for 2001.
   - Twenty-five thousand and sixty six water samples were analyzed and 109,227 measurements stored in ESQUADAT, SERM's water quality database (containing more than 460,576 sample results and 3.3 million measurements).

5. SERM participates in the National Water Quality Guidelines Development initiative. The federal government is leading the development of a national water strategy for Canada. To date work has focussed on guidelines and best management practices to protect water quality.

Risk Management - the situation and strategies

The mandate for water management is housed with many provincial government departments and various levels of government. SERM plans to work with its many partners to clarify roles and to promote stewardship of water resources. SERM will continue to participate in implementing action items from the Water Management Framework to resolve water issues. SERM's ongoing participation in the National Water Quality Guidelines Development initiative will lead to greater protection of provincial water resources. SERM will also promote the message that clean water is everyone's responsibility. More specific strategies to deal with water quality risks are: SERM's compliance monitoring of industrial and mining activities to ensure water quality standards are met; training of municipal water/wastewater system operators; hazardous spill response teams; and mining waste management monitoring.

OBJECTIVE 2

CLEAN AIR

Key actions in support of Objective 2

- SERM conducted a risk assessment to prioritize participation in national air quality initiatives and continues to work with the federal government and industry on a National Pollution Release Inventory.

- SERM ensured all major new developments met the licensing commitments specified under the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) approval. SERM improved environmental review processes to identify and resolve risks early in the project planning cycle. In 2000-01, 62 projects were reviewed or assessed (21 carried over from previous years), six EIAs were ongoing and two projects were deferred.

  2000-01 saw an increase in oil and gas development activity in Saskatchewan, including areas considered environmentally sensitive and those where industrial activity poses risks to the ecosystem. While no oil/gas projects were subject to a full EIA, 14 detailed drilling proposals (representing 130 wells in environmentally sensitive areas) were reviewed. These projects were located primarily in the Great Sand Hills, Manitou Sand Hills, Cypress Hills and the Grand Cheviot grazing pasture. Reviews were also conducted on a seismic program proposal, the Burstall Sand Hills pipeline project, an intensive heavy oil project, and two landfills for non-hazardous upstream oilfield wastes.

  The screening process for environmental assessment of oil and gas projects was refined to increase efficiency and to better reflect local knowledge. New documents (i.e. *Environmental Evaluation Checklist for Oil and Gas Development Projects on Private Land In Saskatchewan, Guidelines for Preparation of an Environmental Protection Plan for Oil and Gas Projects)* were prepared to assist the review process. Copies are available from SERM regional offices or from our web site at http://www.serm.gov.sk.ca/environment/assessment/.

- SERM continued its work as a member of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) on the development of Canada-Wide Standards (CWS) to provide nationally consistent remediation benchmarks and emission management frameworks for: particulate matter; ozone; dioxins and furans (from waste incineration); benzene; and petroleum hydrocarbons in soil. SERM staff also worked to implement the mercury CWS for waste incincration and to maintain Saskatchewan's status as a "Clean Area" under the Particulate Matter and Ambient Ozone CWS.

- A management framework was developed to help address the complexities of transboundary acid deposition (acid rain). The mineral soils and shallow, poorly-buffered lakes of Saskatchewan's Boreal Shield Ecozone are particularly vulnerable to pH decline and could be adversely affected by acidic deposition from northeastern Alberta's expanding oil sands industry. SERM worked with Alberta and the federal government to address acid rain issues from tar sands development. The department gathered and evaluated water samples from 22 lakes; program expansion will lead to the monitoring of more northern lakes (based on their vulnerability to acid deposition), soils and vegetation.

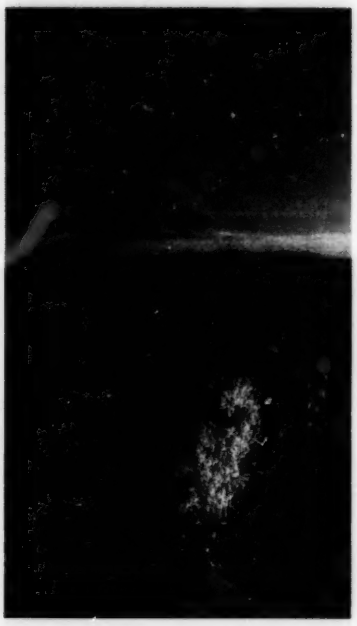
Risk Management - the situation and strategies

Air quality issues in Saskatchewan arise mainly from three sources:

- potentially significant point sources of emissions such as mines or large industrial operations;
- stubble burning near population areas or vulnerable individuals; and
- transboundary movement of air pollutants into and from Saskatchewan.

SERM also works to ensure a Saskatchewan perspective is represented on national efforts to set Canada-wide policies or standards for air pollutants. SERM:

- cooperates with Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF), Saskatchewan Health and farm groups to eliminate stubble burning;
- participates in interprovincial forums on air quality to minimize the adverse impact of other jurisdiction's actions on Saskatchewan's air quality;
- ensures industry emissions are in compliance with standards through permits and enforcement;
- participates in national and interprovincial endeavors on climate change, acid rain, vehicles and fuels, smog, ozone-depleting substances and other air issues to contribute to global air quality improvement that meets our provincial environmental, economic and social objectives; and
- SERM's Clean Air Strategy will help direct efforts in protecting air quality and the health of our ecosystems.



OBJECTIVE 3

CLEAN LAND

Key actions in support of Objective 3

- The department provided an effective level of monitoring and enforcement to ensure compliance with relevant provincial acts and regulations to avoid misuse of Crown Lands and land contamination:
  - LDK Drum Recycling plead guilty to pollution offences under *The Environmental Management and Protection Act*; the company was fined $5,000 and ordered to pay $150,000 that was used to remediate a 0.5 hectare site near Harris that was contaminated with herbicide.
  - SERM, Saskatchewan Labour and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to collaborate in the development and implementation of a new regulatory regime for uranium mining and milling facilities in Saskatchewan. The MOU is designed to protect the health, safety and security of Canadians and their environment while ensuring minimal overlap and duplication.

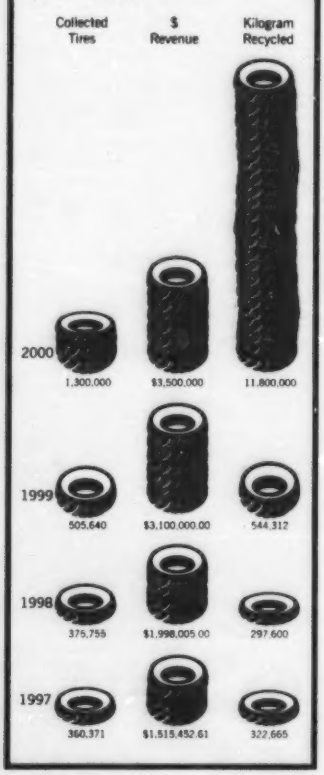
- Saskatchewan Spill Control Centre 1-800-667-7525

  SERM maintained the environment Spill Line, investigated and ensured proper clean-up of accidental hazardous spills. The Spill Report Centre received 350 calls in 2000-01. The department developed a "Made in Saskatchewan" spill response training program for SERM field staff based on Saskatchewan conditions, priorities and occurrences. Tailoring the training to Saskatchewan-specific circumstances and situations results in an efficient spill response to ensure public and environmental safety. Internationally recognized training standards were delivered to staff to ensure rapid and expert spill response is available 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

- SERM worked with industry to prepare decommissioning and reclamation plans (including financial assurances) for industrial sites. Interim approvals were issued for potash decommissioning and reclamation plans and a joint government-industry task group worked to develop long-term operating conditions for the potash industry.

- The department conducted inventory and risk assessments of contaminated sites (including abandoned mines) and developed clean-up strategies for high-risk contaminated sites:
  - A survey was conducted of municipalities requesting assistance to identify "orphaned" fuel storage and sales facilities in Saskatchewan; engineering assessments were conducted and SERM entered into Contribution Agreements with four municipalities.
  - Environmental Protection Branch and the Shield EcoRegion negotiated a draft Federal/Provincial cost sharing agreement to clean up the abandoned uranium mine sites of Gunnar and Lorado.

Annual Review of Tires Collected, Recycled and Revenue Generated (1997 - 2000)



- Centenary funds were used to clean-up high-risk orphaned contaminated sites, including abandoned underground storage tanks at Buffalo Narrows, two sites near Saskatoon, one in Regina and an old refinery site at Kamsack.
- The 2000-01 fiscal year was the first year of the Abandoned Mines Assessment Program. Initial activity focussed on compiling a list of all abandoned sites, their status and owners. Twenty-eight abandoned mines and associated waste disposal sites were inspected and a draft assessment report completed.

SERM continued to support and promote the 4Rs - reduce, reuse, recycle and recover. In 2000-01:

- The Scrap Tire Management Program, managed and operated by the Saskatchewan Scrap Tire Corporation, collected the equivalent of 1.3 million passenger tires - over 11.8 million kilograms of rubber - and generated $3.5 million. The rubber was processed into playground equipment, flooring and fuels, and used in civil engineering applications. Twenty-nine communities participated in Phase II of the Scrap Tire Management Program to remove and recycle scrap tires stockpiled at municipal landfill sites.
- The Saskatchewan Association for Resource Recovery Corporation (SARRC) collected approximately 15 million litres of used oil, 1.7 million used oil filters and 158,000 kilograms of plastic oil containers. By March 2001 there were 31 EcoCentres and 260 used oil collection facilities in 158 Saskatchewan communities where used oil, filters and containers could be safely disposed.
- SARCAN collected over 221 million beverage containers, reducing Saskatchewan's waste by more than 13 million kilograms and returning more than $24 million to the economy. SARCAN operates 71 depots in 62 communities under contract to SERM.
- The Crop Protection Institute's Saskatchewan Pesticide Return program, run in cooperation with SERM, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, SAF, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration and the Canadian Association of Agricultural Retailers, collected 47,150 litres of liquids and 14,593 kilograms of solids for disposal in an environmentally responsible manner (compared to 15,000 litres of liquids and 5,000 kilograms of solids one year ago).
- Crop protection distribution companies, some 200 retail dealers and about 240 collection sites (provided by rural municipalities) participated in the Pesticide Container Collection Program. Approximately 1.7 million containers (a 60 per cent return rate) were collected, cleaned, sealed in specially designed plastic bags and transported to a central depot for recycling.
- SERM's Clean Cat visited 20 schools, relaying the importance of the 4 Rs to some 1,800 students and teachers.

SERM ensured best management practices are followed with hazardous waste at industrial, commercial and mining operations.

SERM promoted regional municipal waste management systems by supporting fledgling regional waste management authorities as they moved to consolidate local landfills and improve recycling efforts.

The department encouraged pollution prevention initiatives in the private and public sectors and developed pollution prevention strategies, e.g. developed a solid waste management strategy for northern Saskatchewan and guidelines for addressing outfitter garbage dumps.

Work on a multi-year project to renew environmental protection legislation continued. SERM and SAF harmonized procedures for reviewing projects on SAF-administered Crown lands.

Proposed uranium developments must undergo an Environmental Impact Assessment. Project specific guidelines help proponents complete EIA and prepare statements (EIS) that are subject to federal and provincial approval. In 2000-01, on-going federal-provincial reviews were:

- McClean Lake Uranium Development:
  - a proposal to dispose of reactive waste rock from the Cigar Lake mine in the mined-out Sue C pit
  - a proposal to allow fishing in specified lakes on the McClean Lake surface lease area subject to consultations with area residents
- a proposal to increase the JEB mill production of processed uranium concentrate (U_3O_8)
- a proposal to mill Cameco's share of the Phase I Mine Plan ore from the Cigar Lake Uranium mine at the Rabbit Lake Uranium Development, and
- Cogema Resources' proposal to decommission the Cluff Lake Uranium Development.

Other 2000-01 environmental assessment review work to ensure Saskatchewan enjoys the benefits of clean water, air and land included:

- Mining: Seabee Gold Mine's proposal to construct a new tailings management facility in Triangle Lake; Hanson Lake Sand Corporation's proposal to quarry and process frac sand for the oil and gas industry; approved PCS Lanigan Potash Mine proposal to modify slimes research component of tailings management; and reviewed and approved expansion proposals for three coal mines.
- Forestry: Weyerhaeuser's 20-year Forest Management Plan for the Prince Albert Forest Management Area; Mee-Toos (Ainsworth/PBCN) five year Term Supply EIA for the Amisk-Atik South Area.
- Agriculture and Food: eight intensive livestock operations (primarily hog operations).
- Energy: 16 projects were reviewed, including the SaskPower transmission line from Prince Albert to Timber Cove (ultimately to La Ronge), the Cory Cogeneration Project (electric power and steam for Cory potash mine), and the SunBridge Wind Farm at Gull Lake.

Risk Management - the situation and strategies

Ensuring clean land includes:

- proper management of the wastes generated by commercial, residential and industrial sources (e.g. modern waste management systems, programming to encourage waste reduction and increased recycling options, effective legislation and enforcement practices);
- cleanup of high risk contaminated sites; and
- managing accidental spills.

SERM manages risks to clean land by:

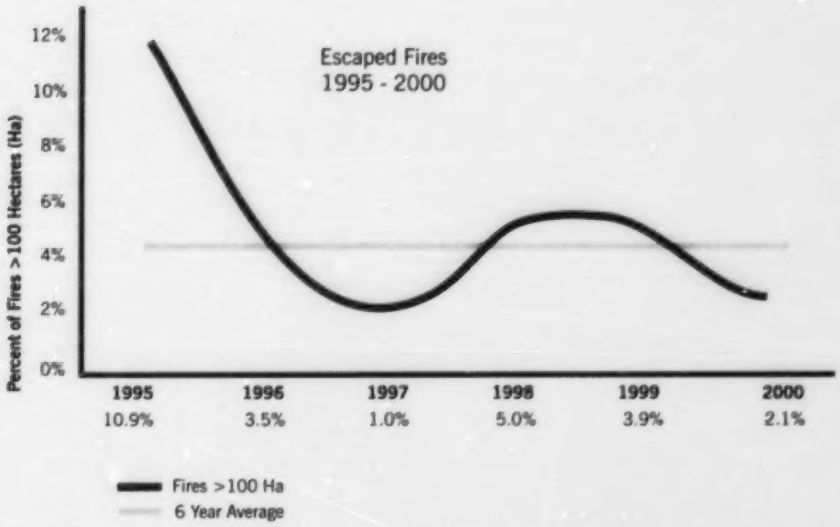
- reviewing and revising its environmental protection legislation to provide additional clarity and tools for protecting our land and resources;
- helping develop national soil quality guidelines that will provide better protection of our soil resources;
- environmental problems related to land often arise from non-point sources (comes from many diffuse sources, e.g. roads) which are difficult to monitor. SERM works with stakeholder groups to clarify roles and promote stewardship of our natural environment;
- moving to more participatory approach (improving industry and self-governing regimes and reporting) while maintaining an effective regulatory and enforcement framework. The department's government and industry partners are encouraged to identify and cleanup high risk contaminated sites. Sectoral funding will be sought to address orphaned or abandoned sites; and
- managing risks from hazardous chemicals accidents through our chemical spills reporting and response system.

OBJECTIVE 4

MINIMIZE RISKS AND ADVERSE IMPACT OF WILD-LAND FIRES ON PEOPLE, PROPERTY AND RESOURCES

Key actions in support of Objective 4

- SERM developed and managed wildfire suppression, forest fire prevention and public education programs:
  - Resources were allocated to support fire suppression (increase the number of fire crews, weather stations and reporting capability). Renewal of SERM's aerial fleet, infrastructure (e.g. detection towers) and equipment is ongoing; potential partnership opportunities are under review.
  - SERM is one of the leaders of the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre's (CIFFC) work to develop a national forest fire protection program. CIFFC developed a five point plan to address Canada's declining capacity to respond to major fire seasons. A joint funding proposal (involving industry and federal, provincial and territorial governments) was unanimously approved by CIFFC. SERM is preparing a business plan for September 2001.
  - Activities in support of the department's strategic plan included preparation of the 2000 Forest Fire Season Performance Assessment. A fire program performance evaluation reviewed operational objectives, program performance and areas for improvement, provided a basis for cost projections, and improved accountability for overall program performance. Performance results for 2000 were:



    - improved success in containment (92 per cent of fires were kept to less than 10 hectares) compared to the five year average of 90.4 per cent;
    - no communities were seriously threatened by wildfire; and
    - there was a 1.8 per cent reduction in fires greater than 100 hectares, and the per cent of escaped fires has dropped from almost 11 per cent (in 1995) to just over 2 per cent in 2000.
  - An ongoing project to assess and inventory Crown lands (and associated values at risk) will help SERM confirm its responsibilities for wildfire suppression. Information was gathered to create a Land Inventory Database to support informed, scientifically based decisions. The project is expected to be completed by March 31, 2002.
  - Amendments to the existing *Prairie and Forest Fire Act* are on track for completion in 2003-04.
  - Prescribed burns on Crown lands supported vegetation management objectives (e.g. controlling invasion by undesirable exotic plants, preventing encroachment of forest on native grasslands) and helping reduce wildfire threat by lessening fuel loads. Planning and executing prescribed fires safely within funding and prescription parameters is an ongoing SERM activity; in 2000-01 Grassland EcoRegion carried out five prescribed burns (affecting 23 hectares), Parkland EcoRegion burned 76 hectares.
  - SERM continued to work with forest companies to harvest stands at risk of wildfire, insect and disease infestations. Fuel breaks are now considered in the review and approval of companies' Annual Operating Plans.

- A project to design and extend grass fire training to municipalities' volunteer fire departments on a cost recovery basis is ongoing; projected completion date is February 2002.
- Shield EcoRegion developed a presentation on how to be "fire smart" and how to use forest fire equipment properly. The presentation was offered to people who have cottage or land leases within Lac La Ronge Provincial Park.
- Smokey Bear made 114 presentations at schools, provincial parks, summer camps and special events.

- SERM contracted with Aboriginal communities and organizations to supply initial attack crews for the fire suppression program. Approximately $1.13 million was spent on salary for 1,524 casual emergency firefighters (the vast majority of them northern residents) to protect our forest resources. SERM works with First Nations to develop fire crews to national interagency exchange standards.

- Initial attack capability at La Loche was increased in recognition of the above average fire numbers in the Buffalo Narrows Forest Protection area.

- The Shield EcoRegion worked with Prince Albert Grand Council and Lac La Ronge Indian Band to create a fuel break around the reserve settlements. East Boreal EcoRegion worked to reduce fire hazards around Weyakwin, Timber Bay, Emma Lake and Christopher Lake. Construction of fuel breaks in the Nisbet Provincial Forest is 50 per cent complete.

- SERM worked with the municipalities that are in or adjacent to Crown lands (for which SERM has fire fighting responsibilities) to develop mutual aid agreements. Agreement objectives are to develop a land inventory database and outline areas of responsibility.

- SERM worked to complete a new Fire and Forest Insect and Disease Management Policy. Phase two of the Fire Forest Insect and Disease public consultation process was completed in June, 2000. The policy supports a strong preparedness system and values-at-risk decision making approach to fire suppression. It incorporates the beneficial role of fire in an ecosystem-based management approach that applies scientific and local knowledge and accommodates economic, social, ecological, and cultural values. Following additional consultation with Crown corporations and other departments administering crown land, the new Fire and Forest Insect and Disease Management Policy is planned for presentation to Cabinet in 2001-02.

- SERM is examining how climate change might impact the department's fire fighting effectiveness and how to best provide the public with information on how climate change might affect them. Work on a list of indicators to determine climate change impacts was begun with an expected completion date of March 2002.

Risk Management - the situation and strategies

Wildland fires can pose significant risks to communities and to timber resources. Climate change, human settlement patterns and fire suppression activities may increase the potential severity of wildfires. Fighting fires can be costly as well as hazardous. Investment in prevention, detection and initial attack help to minimize the number of dangerous fires. Harvesting practices of forest companies (which change the fuel composition) and prescribed burning are other actions that can mitigate severe wildfires.

Fire, however, is a natural process. Assuming there are no significant human values at risk, fire can be beneficial for Saskatchewan landscapes.

- SERM is helping develop provincial strategies to address climate change with other government departments and agencies.
- In the event of multiple fire starts under severe burning conditions, SERM focusses fire suppression activities where the greatest threats to most critical values at risk are identified (e.g. human communities).

GOAL II: PROTECT ECOSYSTEM HEALTH AND MAINTAIN NATURAL ABUNDANCE OF RENEWABLE RESOURCES

OBJECTIVE 5

SPECIES AND HABITAT AT RISK ARE PROTECTED

Key actions in support of Objective 5

- SERM identified, established and managed parks and protected areas on Crown Resource lands representative of each of the province's 11 ecoregions. Six sites (117,465 hectares) representing landscapes of the Churchill River Upland and Mid-boreal Lowland Ecoregions and one site (3,207 hectares) from the Mid-boreal Upland Ecoregion were designated as part of the Representative Areas Network (RAN) in 2000 - 2001. This brings the network of ecologically important lands and waters to 4.6 million hectares province-wide. An additional 2 million hectares of Crown land sites were identified and public consultations leading to RAN designation continue. RAN designation furthers the conservation of Saskatchewan's biological diversity and enables the department to monitor ecosystem health.

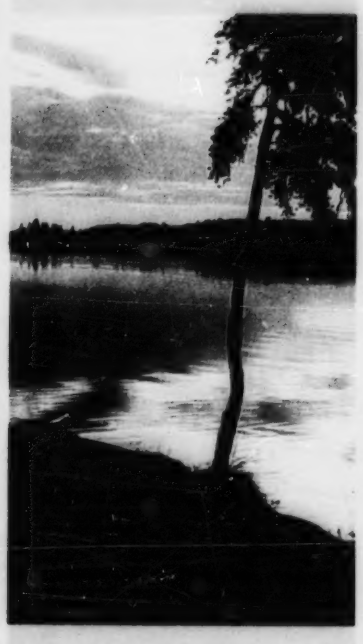
- The department identified species and habitats at risk and established recovery programs where needed.
  - The Wild Species at Risk Program focussed on addressing staffing and funding requirements to meet provincial protection and recovery obligations identified in the National Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk in Canada. A more comprehensive process to the current single species recovery and protection efforts is scheduled for completion in 2001-02.
  - SERM, SaskPower, the Province of Manitoba, and the Cumberland House Fishermen's Co-operative Efforts have partnered to work toward restoration of the Saskatchewan River's sturgeon population. Actions include marking and genetic typing, releasing fry and fingerlings, and studying the river ecosystem that is critical to understanding sturgeon ecology and a successful restoration program.
  - East Boreal EcoRegion collaborated with Cumberland House, Shoal Lake, Red Earth and Opaskwayak First Nations, Manitoba, and provincial conservation organizations to start developing a moose conservation and management strategy for the declining moose herd in the Cumberland Delta.
  - A survey by Alberta, Saskatchewan, Montana and the federal government revealed the swift fox has been successfully re-established in southern Saskatchewan and Alberta; populations are viable, growing and spreading into Montana.

- SERM managed and restored habitats necessary to maintain populations of all species:
  - Saskatchewan has 15 ecological reserves - 11 of which were established under the Representative Areas Network initiative, seven of these were established in 2000-01.
  - Parkland EcoRegion is a partner in the Wetland and Riparian Areas Stewardship Program pilot project on the Upper Assiniboine River Basin east of Yorkton. Spurred by an investigation into alleged illegal drainage of wetlands, the five-year project will examine conservation easements on private land as a tool to protect wetlands at risk of loss.
  - SERM signed nine conservation easements covering 532 hectares in 2000-01.
  - SERM worked with the Government of Canada to achieve proclamation of Saskatchewan's second national park. The Grasslands National Park, located in the province's southwest, consists of 485 square kilometres of the threatened mixed grass prairie ecosystem. The park will play a major role in promoting habitat restoration and species preservation and reintroduction. It is home to 36 rare plant species and 14 of Saskatchewan's 27 at risk animal species such as sage grouse, burrowing owls, ferruginous hawks, prairie rattlesnakes, eastern short-horned lizards, swift foxes and black-tailed prairie dogs.

- A Provincial Forest Ecosystem Protection Strategy to enhance enforcement and compliance in Saskatchewan's forests was delayed. SERM continues testing of a new Timber Information System to generate enforcement/compliance permit data.

- 2000-01 was the second year of a multi-year program to complete ecosite classification and a field data collection program to build a Saskatchewan forest vegetation inventory system.

- Road retirement and reclamation plans have become an integral part of forest companies' annual operating plans.



OBJECTIVE 6

BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEMS ARE SUSTAINED

Risk Management - the situation and strategies

Species at risk are almost always a symptom of larger problems such as habitat loss or fragmentation and can only be effectively addressed by dealing with these problems. Excessive recreational and commercial demands can degrade landscapes. Wetlands can be threatened by drainage, flood control and channelling practices. Native prairie areas in the south are fragmented and subject to invasion by exotic species. In the north, the challenge is to manage major developments (e.g. mining, forestry, roads) to ensure sustainable ecosystems. SERM is:

- working with forest industry to maintain important habitats through techniques such as 20-year plans, environmental review, standards and monitoring;
- monitoring and protecting health of important habitats and SERM lands (e.g. Representative Areas Network);
- protecting habitat through the Saskatchewan Water Management Framework;
- continuing to review oil, gas, mining, and other developments to ensure impacts are minimized and mitigated;
- controlling exotic species and restoring impacted lands;
- reducing or preventing fragmentation through habitat protection programs; and
- identifying and working to recover species at risk.

Key actions in support of Objective 6

■ Indices to measure threats to ecological integrity (e.g. overharvest, pollution, exotic species, habitat loss) are under development. Work to March 2001 included: completed analysis of habitat loss and fragmentation south of the forest, developed protocols to monitor water quality and alien invasive plants, and collected data on pesticide and other chemical use. A full set of integrity measurements will be tested on the Assiniboine Watershed in the summer of 2001.

■ SERM protected and managed lands and waters to maintain or restore ecological functions:

- The criteria and indicators for the Forest Landscape Level Monitoring Program and implementation protocols for Forest Management Effects Monitoring were developed and submitted for review by the Provincial Science Advisory Board. The protocols were field tested during the summers of 1999 and 2000 prior to full implementation.
- SERM is working with other agencies and departments to develop an ecological aquatic classification framework for the province.

■ The negative ecological effects posed by the import of wild species was addressed by:

- educating staff, industry, stakeholders and Aboriginal groups on the problems posed by invasive exotic plant species;
- Mistik Management now uses non-invasive native seed mixes in the reclamation of disturbed sites in their Forest Management Area;
- SERM is working with Saskatchewan's outfitting industry to reach agreement on what should be used to bait deer and bears to reduce the risk of introducing exotics to the forest;
- West Boreal EcoRegion used reclamation techniques that stimulate natural regeneration of areas disturbed by oil and gas exploration to reduce the potential introduction of exotic species; and
- import protocols for captive deer and elk were developed and are undergoing review by industry and SAF.

■ The department conducted research to support programs to protect and restore ecological integrity:

- SERM signed an agreement with Ducks Unlimited (DU) Canada to begin work on the Pasquia project, part of DU's Western Boreal Forest Initiative to understand the area's land cover inventory, water quality and migratory bird populations.
- Standards and guidelines were drafted to manage dwarf mistletoe (parasitic plants that affect pines) and spruce budworm.

■ SERM prepared and implemented ecosystem and biodiversity protection plans:

- The Conservation Action Plan for Saskatchewan's Park Lands set out policies and actions to be taken over the next five years to preserve the integrity of ecosystems and natural and cultural features within the provincial park system.

- The document *"Conserving Saskatchewan's Natural Environment: Framework for a Saskatchewan Biodiversity Action Plan"* was produced and Phase I of public consultations to develop a Biodiversity Action Plan for Saskatchewan was completed. A draft Saskatchewan Biodiversity Action Plan is scheduled for September 2001. The Action Plan will be finalized and implemented following Phase II of public consultation.
- The Shield EcoRegion is piloting a comprehensive monitoring plan for ecosystem health and productivity. Risk assessment, ecological condition and management monitoring includes current conditions and key threats information as well as detailed plans, actions and responsibilities. The monitoring plan for clean water has been completed and field work has begun.

■ SERM cooperates with other government departments and the oil and gas industry to maximize the return to the province from oil and gas reserves while minimizing impact on biodiversity, natural habitat and ecosystem processes. In 2000-01 there was a sharp increase in oil and gas exploration activity in the Grassland EcoRegion; more than 1,100 well drilling proposals were reviewed and approved with caveats to ensure ecosystems were protected.

■ Saskatchewan Energy and Mines (SEM) and SERM are members of the National Air Issue Coordinating Committee that works to develop provincial and national strategies to address climate change. A list of the Government of Saskatchewan's actions on climate change was included in *Canada's First National Business Plan* and climate change initiatives by all levels of Saskatchewan governments were compiled for *A Compendium of Climate Change Initiatives: Taking Action on Climate Change*. Other climate change activities were: SERM co-chaired the Indicators Working Group, held a workshop to promote understanding and awareness, and participated in a poll to determine Saskatchewan residents' impressions of climate change.

SERM and SEM co-chair the Saskatchewan Stakeholder Advisory Committee on Climate Change that brings a Saskatchewan perspective to climate change issues and provides input to government. The committee reviewed work by Climate Change Issue Tables (those relating to municipalities, sinks, forestry, electricity, transportation, buildings and industry) and recommended actions to guide Saskatchewan's Climate Change activities.

■ SERM and SAF prepared for consultations to reform *The Provincial Lands Act* to help ensure all Crown lands are managed in a sustainable manner.

■ Examples of SERM activity to minimize the adverse impacts of major new developments on the environment and health of ecosystems included:
- West Boreal EcoRegion worked with forest industry and stakeholder committees to institute a forest road management planning process.
- Weyerhaeuser Canada Ltd. received Ministerial Approval of their Environmental Impact Statement and Twenty Year Forest Management Plan for a 3.2 million hectare area surrounding Prince Albert National Park. For the first time in Saskatchewan, the approval was integrated with international ISO 14001 environmental impact standards. SERM's reallocation of nearly 1.9 million hectares (relinquished by Weyerhaeuser) to new community-based northern forest companies provides the foundation for Saskatchewan's ongoing forest industry expansion.
- Due to a reduction in L & M Wood Products' milling capacity, the company received a one year delay to implement conditions associated with the approval of their 20-year Forest Management Plan.

Risk Management - the situation and strategies

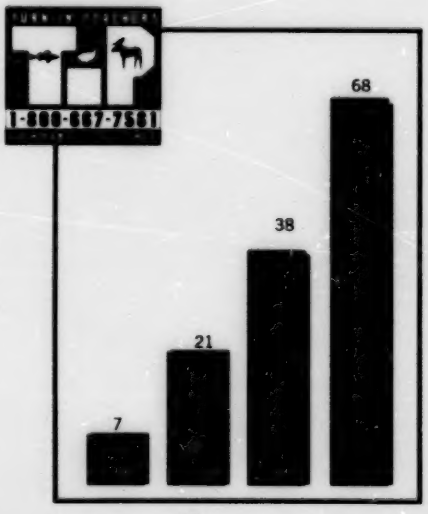
Biodiversity, habitat and ecosystem health are impacted by habitat loss and fragmentation, exotic species invasions, overharvest, pesticides and pollution. No single agency or organization controls all these factors. Responsibility for the provincial landscape is shared by private land owners, industry, government departments and others. Sustainability requires biological, social and economic impacts be considered. While the long term interest of all groups converge on sustainability, short term objectives can, and often do, diverge. SERM:
- works with land managers and owners to promote good landscape stewardship;
- uses partnerships to build the representative areas network and implement programs like the Biodiversity Action Plan, Prairie Conservation Action Plan and Water Management Framework to achieve goals;
- uses 20-year Forest Management Plans to guide sustainable forest use; and
- develops and reports on ecosystem health measurements.

GOAL III: FAIR OPPORTUNITY FOR SUSTAINABLE USE AND ENJOYMENT OF NATURAL RENEWABLE RESOURCES

OBJECTIVE 7

EQUITABLE ALLOCATION OF NATURAL RENEWABLE RESOURCES

Key actions in support of Objective 7

- The department monitored status and use of harvested populations (e.g. fish, wildlife, forestry) Greater outfitter input (e.g. submissions of biological samples, reporting on client activity) enhanced SERM's ability to assess activity and population levels.
  - Community volunteers conducted surveys of songbirds, owls and amphibians that provided SERM with baseline data to assess the impacts of development and climate change.
  - The Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) monitoring program was established in 1997 to test if the disease could be found in Saskatchewan's wild cervids (elk, mule and white-tailed deer). One of the approximately 1,400 heads submitted by hunters for analysis in 2000-01 tested positive. SERM is expanding the program and will conduct more extensive monitoring in 2001-02.
  - East Boreal EcoRegion staff worked with Weyerhaeuser and Louisiana Pacific OSB Mill in Swan River to stop illegal trespass cuts in the Northern Provincial Forest.
- SERM prepared and implemented annual hunting and fishing strategies.
- Research to support allocation and management of fish and wildlife was conducted.
  - EcoRegion staff conducted fish and wildlife surveys, harvest assessments and biological sampling to ensure Saskatchewan's natural resources are sustained for subsistence, recreational and commercial anglers and hunters.
  - The Shield EcoRegion launched a new woodland caribou sighting program.
- The department monitored client needs and satisfaction:
  - SERM's policy on the sale of wildlife was refined to be more responsive to the use of wildlife for art, ceremonial and religious purposes.
  - SERM developed the policy paper *Creating Effective Collaborative Management for the 21st Century: A Strategy for Improving the Effectiveness of Co-Management in Environmental and Resource Management.*
- SERM implemented and enforced provincial regulations and policies:
  - SERM processes Crown Resource Land disposition applications and monitors compliance with land disposition conditions/restrictions. In 2000-01, 35 cases of unauthorized use of Crown land were processed.
  - 

Number of environmental offense cases handled through Alternative Measures rather than the traditional court system.

- In conjunction with other government departments, SERM developed and implemented Integrated Land Use Plans for Crown lands. Completed planning processes include:
  - Prince Albert Model Forest Ecosystem-based Plan (367,000 hectares)
  - Pasquia-Porcupine Integrated Forest Land Use Plan (2,000,000 hectares)
  - Prairie Conservation Action Plan
  - Fur Lakes Land and Resource Management Plan (1,573 hectares)
  - Fowler and Murphy Lakes Integrated Resource Management Plan (6,022 hectares)
  - Manitou Sand Hills Integrated Resource Management Plan (42,700 hectares)
  - Great Sand Hills Land Use Strategy (190,000 hectares)
  - SERM also worked on planning initiatives related to Saskatchewan's forest economic expansion including:
  - an expanded North Central La Ronge Integrated Forest Land Use Plan
  - Pinehouse-Dipper Integrated Forest Land Use Plan
  - Fort a la Corne Integrated Forest Land Use Plan
  - Amisk-Atik Integrated Forest Land Use Plan (4,400,000 hectares) is expected to be complete in 2001-02.

  Other planning processes to be completed during the next fiscal year are the La Ronge Integrated Land Use and Development Plan (63,000 hectares) and the Whitehood Land Use and Resource Management Plan. Planning processes expected to be completed within the next several years are: Fort a la Corne and Nisbet Provincial Forests; Athabasca Road Corridor; and Buffalo Pound Lake Shore Development.

  New planning initiatives include: East side fringe; RM Torch River; RM Stove Creek; RM Bjorkdale. Consultations on planning needs were begun on a proposed planning area of 5.4 million hectares of the Forest Fringe.

- SERM processed Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) claims on Crown resource lands and explored options for increasing land ownership among northerners. The TLE process enables First Nations to purchase land to meet their shortfall, equity and honour acres; 392,995 hectares of SERM Crown land are currently under selection. Three of 28 bands have achieved their shortfall acreages and created reserves, an additional 12 bands have acquired their shortfall acreages and are expected to move to reserve status by the end of 2001.

- SERM began implementation of the Provincial Fisheries Assessment Action Plan. Actions included acquiring hydro acoustic survey equipment for deployment on Candle and Whiteswan Lakes to support development of their commercial fishing potential.

- Specifications for digital capture of land and map records compatible with a computerized provincial Crown land registry system were developed to improve service to the public.

- Consultation processes to integrate and enhance legislation, regulations and policies used to manage SERM's Crown resource lands were developed.

Risk Management - the situation and strategies

Sustainability is the paramount consideration when making resource allocation decisions. Inadequate information can lead to over allocation of our renewable resources (fish, wildlife, forests) resulting in reduced populations. Resource availability is subject to cycles of abundance and scarcity and SERM works to allocate resources among competitive interests equitably and fairly. SERM strives to be proactive, working with organizations to resolve conflicts before they become intractable, developing partnership agreements and strategic responses to court decisions on Aboriginal rights and the use/allocation of natural renewable resources. SERM ensures equitable allocation of natural renewable resources by:

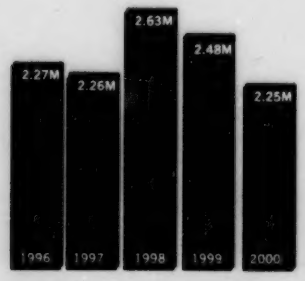
- monitoring and inventory programs to guide allocation,
- shifting greater allocation responsibility to the community level,
- using the precautionary principle[1] to avoid over-allocation,
- pursuing active partnerships with First Nations,
- developing a system for improving client service and information management to reduce information gaps, and
- applying SERM's co-management systems.

[1] ***The Precautionary Principle states when an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically.***

OBJECTIVE 8

PROVIDE SASKATCHEWAN CITIZENS ACCESSIBLE RECREATIONAL AND EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES ON PROVINCIAL PARK AND CROWN RESOURCE LANDS

ESTIMATED PARK VISITATIONS (APRIL - SEPTEMBER)



Key actions in support of Objective 8

- SERM protected and managed park and Crown lands that give access to recreational and learning opportunities:
  - A Contributory Partnerships/Sponsorships policy was completed to help facilitate sponsorships and donations for park facilities and services.
  - A Commercial Outdoor Recreation Policy identifying policy guidelines for ecotourism, nature tourism, and adventure tourism activities on SERM Crown Resource lands and provincial park lands was completed in draft and presented at the annual Ecotourism Society of Saskatchewan conference in February, 2001.
  - A quarter section of land near Christopher Lake was designated as a new protected area under *The Parks Act*.

- The department ensured provision of safe recreational and educational facilities and services in provincial parks according to the Parks Tomorrow Strategy:
  - There were 2,254,878 visitors to provincial parks in 2000, a 9.2 per cent decrease from the previous summer.
  - A Conservation Action Plan for Provincial Park Lands and a draft educational strategy was completed, while a status report on actions taken under Saskatchewan Provincial Parks Directions for the 21st Century (1997) was deferred to 2001.

- A parks financial allocation model was implemented to ensure operating funds received by individual parks are in proportion to their facilities and services.

- SERM developed and maintained partnerships to build on basic provincial park services and resource stewardship programs. For example, SERM and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada entered into agreements with Nekaneet, Carry the Kettle and Waterhen First Nations to establish First Nations Interpretive Programs within Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park and Meadow Lake Provincial Park. The programs focus on First Nations culture, history and contemporary issues, ensuring a balanced story is told through park interpretive programs.

- The department provided learning opportunities on stewardship and importance of resources:
  - More than 66,000 people attended 1,700 programs or special events offered in Saskatchewan's provincial parks and recreation sites. There were 17,800 visitors to the four provincial historic parks, including 6,200 students.
  - The provincial Fish Culture Station at Fort Qu'Appelle provided tours for 4,500 visitors.

- A comprehensive marketing strategy was prepared based on information gathered from a survey of visitors to Saskatchewan's provincial parks. The survey provided SERM with information on the impact of marketing activities and people's motivation for visiting provincial parks.

- Development of recreational use of Crown Resource Lands was supported:
  - A report on options for revisions to *The Regional Parks Act* was developed and presented to the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association for feedback.
  - In 2000-01 there were 126 commercial leases covering 166 businesses in provincial parks.

Risk Management - the situation and strategies

Recreational and economic returns from provincial park and Crown lands must be balanced with the conservation of ecosystems and natural and cultural resources. Resolving conflicting demands on the use of park and Crown resource lands is a challenge. The department expects the demand for quality recreational and educational opportunities will continue to grow. The demands placed on some areas are straining their accomodation capacity while others are under-utilized when compared to other parts of Canada and the world. SERM is:

- developing a sustainable provincial parks strategy;
- implementing the Conservation Action Plan for Park Lands;
- involving the public and encourage partnerships in planning, developing and managing recreational opportunities on park and Crown resource lands;
- working with Tourism Saskatchewan to track park use trends, attract different clients, retain and expand current park/outdoor recreation use;
- involving public advisory groups in the review of management directions; and
- Focussing capital funding on core facilities.

Objective 9

Increased economic benefits based on sustainable use of natural renewable resources

Key actions in support of Objective 9

- SERM began implementation of the regulations of the new *Forest Resources Management Act* and monitored status and use of harvested forests.

- SERM continued to negotiate with forestry companies in the development of Forest Management Agreements (FMAs) covering expanded wood supply allocations.

- The department worked to develop a value-added processing strategy for the forest industry. SERM began discussions with large sawmillers about managing wood residue, with a primary focus on enhanced use of residues through forest industry business ventures.

- SERM promoted sustainable park and renewable resource based tourism. A Market Segmentation and Opportunity Identification report identified five key consumer segments. SERM's annual park promotional campaign was redesigned to target these key markets.

- SERM facilitated sustainable development of environment and renewable resource based business opportunities by:
  - working with fisherman cooperatives to enhance the economic returns to the province from our commercial fishing industry by using new tools, harvesting underutilized species and regulations (restrictions to maintain fish populations). Activities under the provincial strategy to revitalize commercial fishing in Saskatchewan included:
    - maximize use of existing harvest quotas by training fishermen in the use of trap nets;
    - enhance fish stock information using new technology (e.g. hydro acoustic survey equipment);
    - began a pilot project with First Nations to enhance commercial use and economic return from underutilized fish species; and
    - subsidised commercial fishermen's freight expenditures.
  - cooperating with other departments to produce a draft aquaculture policy.
  - issued 1,173 Forest Product Permits in 2000-01 and government agencies planted over 4 million seedlings in provincial forests.
  - approximately 9,000 land use dispositions (leases/permits for sand and gravel, traditional resource use, wild rice land, etc.) generated $8.37 million in revenue in 2000-01.

- Maintained or re-established populations by stocking over 43 million fish of 10 different species (rainbow-, brook-, brown- , tiger and lake trout, splake, walleye, pike, perch and sturgeon) in 230 water bodies.

- SERM implemented the forest carbon sequestering program in partnership with SaskPower - 1.5 million seedlings were planted with funding provided by SaskPower. In return the utility received a credit for carbon removed from the atmosphere by the growing forest.

Risk Management - the situation and strategies

The development of viable business ventures and markets are key to Saskatchewan's successful forest sector expansion. The province's forest resources are being utilized at approximately 50 per cent of sustainable development levels. Land use planning is essential to determine limits to sustainable economic expansion and balance demands between users of forested areas for commercial logging, mining and recreational use. SERM is:

- working with forest industry, northern leaders, provincial and federal government agencies, and financial institutions to develop and implement coordinated forest sector expansion plans;
- supporting a provincial forestry centre to match existing and emerging technologies to expanding forest industry needs, to market Saskatchewan forestry expertise and to improve forestry education and employment opportunities for northern residents;
- improving ecologically based operating and resource management guidelines and auditing compliance;
- developing sound policy to provide direction to aquaculture operators;
- maintaining a sustainable provincial park system, including a long term facility renewal program;
- ensuring designation and protection of natural areas through integrated land use planning; and
- in conjunction with Tourism Saskatchewan, developing and implementing marketing plans to increase tourism.

OBJECTIVE 10

FIRST NATIONS AND METIS RIGHTS AND THEIR INTERESTS IN THE USE OF NATURAL RENEWABLE RESOURCES ARE MET THROUGH COOPERATIVE MEANS

Key actions in support of Objective 10

- SERM established partnership arrangements with Tribal Councils and Aboriginal communities. As requested, SERM provides expertise to First Nations to assist resource management planning and enforcement on reserve and Treaty Land Entitlement lands. For example:
  - SERM's partnership with the Montreal Lake Cree Nation resulted in a successful spring commercial sucker fishery, the development of an elk and caribou monitoring survey (to be implemented in 2001) and cooperative enforcement activities.
  - SERM and Agency Chiefs Tribal Council (ACTC) of Pelican Lake, Witchekan Lake and Big River First Nations signed agreements to ensure ACTC participation in environment and renewable resource management and facilitate economic opportunities (particularly in the forestry sector).
  - Partnership discussions with Clearwater River Dene Nation were initiated to address joint interests in resource management and economic development in traditional lands.

- Staff employed through a FSIN/SERM Partnership work as liaisons for SERM and Tribal Councils and work with SERM on First Nations policy.

- A Metis Nations of Saskatchewan (MNS)/SERM bilateral task force was established to address natural resource management issues of mutual concern. The MNS/SERM Partnership and a resource management coordinator (employed by MNS) provides coordination and policy advice to both SERM and the MNS.

- Training to enhance understanding of Aboriginal culture was developed and delivered to SERM staff.

- The department maintained policy framework, tools and strategies to guide SERM's decisions and activities around Aboriginal rights and involvement in resource management, including:
  - draft principles and a consultation strategy for traditional cabins affected by the Sundown court decision were completed;
  - SERM prepared to host an inter-jurisdictional symposium on Aboriginal involvement in renewable resource management;
  - developing a cooperative resource management regime with northern Metis communities,
  - analyzed provincial Metis hunting and fishing rights as a basis for SERM's response to any future expansion of Metis Aboriginal rights and input into the government's proposed Metis Act legislation, including the interest of Metis people in renewable resource harvesting;
  - completed strategies and responses to legal challenges - Regina v. Cyr and Ironeagle, R. v. Maurice and Gardiner, and R. v. Keepness;
  - produced the Aboriginal Affairs Bulletin to keep staff, other departments and agencies informed; and
  - created SERM's Aboriginal Advisory Committee to identify and recommend actions to support First Nations and Metis interests and rights to natural renewable resources.

- SERM assisted FSIN and MNS to develop their professional capacity to manage renewable resource harvesting in a sustainable manner in coordination with provincial resource harvest management programs. Initiatives to facilitate educational and economic opportunities in environmental and renewable resource based business included:
  - collaboration with Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC) and Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences to explore development of a university degree program that will qualify First Nations and Aboriginal students to work as Conservation Officers within Canada;
  - worked with SIFC, University of Regina, University of Saskatchewan and other provincial government departments to develop an Aboriginal Youth Environmental Employment Project;
  - played a role in the Northern Saskatchewan Environmental Industries Skills Needs Assessment for Aboriginal People (to be completed by September, 2001); and
  - under the leadership of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, continued work on a provincial Metis and Off-Reserve First Nations Strategy, including a forestry training component to ensure significant employment opportunities will exist for Aboriginal people within the forestry sector.

Risk Management - the situation and strategies

While constitutionally protected Aboriginal rights to fish and wildlife for subsistence use have the highest priority, the extent of these rights and their interest in the uses of other resources (e.g. forest harvesting) has not yet been fully defined. This uncertainity poses a challenge. Consultation and cooperative processes enhance relationships and result in better resource management decisions for a sustainable resource base. SERM:

- emphasizes cooperative arrangements with Aboriginal organizations at the provincial, tribal council and First Nation/Metis levels;
- supports capacity building with First Nations and Metis to develop expertise in the resource management sector that will assist in better resource management decision making; and
- enters into partnership arrangements with First Nation and Metis organizations to facilitate dialogue, consultations, and mutually beneficial decision-making.

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF SERM'S INTEGRATING SUPPORT GOALS

SERM HAD 802 PERMANENT CLASSIFIED, 85 PERMANENT PART TIME, 61 TERM AND 702 LABOUR SERVICE EMPLOYEES FOR A TOTAL OF 1,650 STAFF EFFECTIVE MARCH 31, 2001. THE DEPARTMENT MAINTAINS OFFICES IN 52 COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE.

A: Communications

- A four-year communications strategy was developed that established a more pro-active approach and clarified the department's priorities.
- SERM's web site (www.serm.gov.sk.ca) received close to 3 million "hits" in 2000-01, a 416 per cent increase from 1999-2000.
- The department began work to restructure its intranet to provide staff with timely, consistent, accurate and accessible information.
- A training course was developed to improve staff's ability to help and interact with the media.
- SERM participated in market research projects to provide information useful in strategic planning and communications.
- SERM worked to improve the understanding and awareness of environmental impact assessments with developers, the public, government and SERM staff. A planning guide to set goals and monitor outcomes was drafted; a work plan is under development.
- Saskatchewan worked with the other provinces and territories to formulate a national position on proposed amendments to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEA). The provinces and territories unanimously endorsed a package of recommendations conveyed to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency. Discussions with Manitoba and Alberta to develop cooperative agreements on environmental assessment have been deferred pending results of the five year review of the CEA Act.
- *Saskatchewan's State of the Environment Report 2001 - The Taiga Shield Ecozone: Land of the Caribou* provides information on Saskatchewan's northernmost ecoregion. State of the Environment reports are produced every two years to provide an overview of the province's environment, resources and progress toward sustainable development.
- SERM's Inquiry Centre provides one-window access for people contacting the department. The Inquiry Centre fielded over 26,000 phone calls during 2000-01, an increase of 6,731 from the previous year.

B: Financial Management

- SERM improved and refined the reliability, timeliness and accuracy of the Financial Management System (FMS) implemented in 1999. This included: training; documentation of key processes; development of reporting, budgeting, forecasting and electronic approvals, internal system controls and reconciliation procedures. Efficiency and compliance audits for the Fire Management and Forest Protection Branch (FMFP) were completed as was an external revenue audit.

C: Human Resource Management

- SERM worked with Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences to develop a parks training course.
- Staff started work on a strategic human resource planning process. Demographic data was collected to understand occupational demands and labour supplies required to meet SERM's business needs. A FMFP legacy document was produced as part of a larger succession planning process.
- SERM cooperated with the Public Service Commission to complete outstanding classification actions and appeals.
- Implementation of SERM's Workplace Diversity pilot project began in September, 2000. Three Diversity Teams worked to enhance staff (particularly managers) understanding of diversity and to improve the department's capacity to recruit for diversity. Formal evaluation is scheduled for September 2001.
- 2000-01 was the first year of a three-year Occupational Health and Safety Strategic Plan. Initiatives to enhance worker safety focus on:
  - a health and wellness program to manage the stresses associated with daily living through education related to exercise, nutrition, personal care, ergonomic training, and a repetitive injury and back care program.

  - delivered new aviation directives and training standards for SERM staff using air transportation.
  - delivered a Hearing Conservation Program with regular testing of staff and monitoring of noise environments that exceed safety limits.
  - established Critical Incident/Traumatic Event protocols, including a peer support system.
- The Organizational Development Action Plan outlined steps to achieve organizational goals: highly skilled and motived employees in a continuous learning environment (e.g. offered workshops such as *Roles of the Leader* and *Project Management);* efficient electronic communication; recognition for achievements (e.g. SERM's Award for Excellence); effective communication and evaluation. An all-staff survey was conducted to determine how staff view the department and their role within it.
- SERM's Mentoring Program was expanded to promote career exploration and development opportunities for SERM staff. The program provides participants a chance to explore new subjects, program areas and career options within SERM.

D: Information Management:

- Ninety per cent of SERM staff have completed a survey to identify information gaps and consequent decision making risks. Results of the data analysis are used in the development of SERM's Information Management Strategic Plan.
- Technological improvements include:
  - a corporate data model was developed to improve information retrieval;
  - customized application to manage and track fixed assets and inventory through bar codes and a centralized database;
  - implementation of the Park Management System (e.g. automated camping permits) was completed; and
  - emergency fire fighter wage, fire personnel and contract aviation processes were resolved.

E: Corporate Planning:

- SERM continues to develop its strategic planning processes consistent with the government's Accountability Framework announced in the December 1999 Throne Speech. Work during 2000-01 began to focus on performance measure development that will allow SERM to set benchmarks, measure progress toward planned goals, evaluate programs and outcomes, and develop risk assessment and management strategies. Future work will reflect the continued development and refinement of measurements and activities to increase accountability and improve public confidence and trust.

F: Property Management:

- A capital budget of $150,000 was expended on projects outside of provincial parks including: new spur dyke at Pike Lake, an addition to the Tanker Base office at La Ronge Airport, rehabilitation of the well at Fort Qu'Appelle's Fish Culture Station and a new storage facility at Beauval.
- SERM conducted an audit to identify long-term office accommodation and personal work environment needs.

G: Legislative, Policy and Program Support:

- SERM's policy improvement project identified some 60 issues and outlined recommendations for further work in the areas of: professional development, policy communication, clarification of roles and responsibilities, SERM's policy agenda, policy development and approval, and clarity/common definitions.
- An action plan for improving the process to develop Cabinet Decision Items was drafted. Some actions have been implemented but the overall plan is subject to further internal consultations and revision before full implementation in 2001-02.
- A four-year strategic legislative agenda setting out SERM's legislative priorities was completed.
- Eleven regulations were repealed as part of the Regulatory Reform Initiative.

Financial Overview

The following represents an overview of SERM's financial activity. In 2000-01 the department spent $125,356,000 and collected $39,871,000 on activities related to its mandate.

M121

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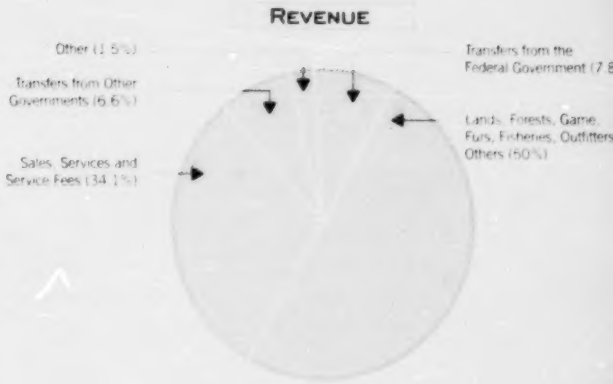
REVENUES 2000-01

PERIOD ENDING MARCH 31, 2001 (IN $000'S)

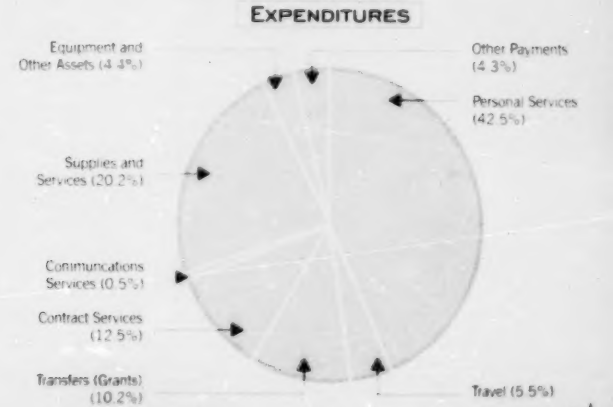
Transfer from the Federal Government	3,120
Other Revenues:	
Interest, premium, discount exchange	16
Lands, Forest, Game, Furs, Fisheries, Outfitters, other	19,950
Conditional Revenue	-
Revolving Fund Profits	-
Sales, Services and Service Fees	13,569
Transfers from Other Governments	2,615
Other	601
Total	$39,871


REVENUE
Other (1.5%)
Transfers from Other Governments (6.6%)
Sales, Services and Service Fees (34.1%)
Transfers from the Federal Government (7.8
Lands, Forests, Game, Furs, Fisheries, Outfitters Others (50%)

EXPENDITURES 2000-01

PERIOD ENDING MARCH 31, 2001 (IN $000'S)

	Personal Services	Travel	Transfers (Grants)	Contract Services	Comm. Services	Supplies & Services	Equipment & Other Assets	Other Expend	Total Expend (Actual)	Revised Estimate	Over (Under) Expend
Administration	6,035	270	-	138	460	488	276	76	7,743	7,617	126
Accommodation and Central Services	-	-	-	92	-	5,135	9	-	5,236	5,623	(387)
Environmental Assessment	578	32	51	62	1	35	32	-	791	826	(35)
Parks and Special Places	2,193	216	199	1,898	1	738	196	-	5,441	5,261	180
Fish and Wildlife	2,223	374	590	589	19	1,385	245	-	5,425	5,311	114
Fish and Wildlife Development Fund	-	-	3,374	-	-	-	-	-	3,374	3,060	314
Operations	18,361	3,107	12	1,095	31	3,097	1,992	5,301	32,996	32,403	593
Forest Ecosystems	3,433	553	24	7,890	10	626	283	-	12,819	13,230	(411)
Fire Management and Forest Protection	16,211	1,981	-	3,222	36	13,463	2,152	-	37,065	28,789	8,276
Environmental Protection	1,876	116	8,555	118	5	148	136	-	10,954	11,132	(178)
Policy and Public Involvement	1,170	68	41	384	3	72	55	-	1,793	1,865	(72)
Sustainable Land Management	1,214	122	2	126	10	131	114	-	1,719	1,807	(88)
Totals	$53,294	$6,839	$12,848	$15,614	$576	$25,318	$5,490	$5,377	$125,356	$116,924	$8,432



Revenues 2000-01

Period Ending March 31, 2001 (in $000's)

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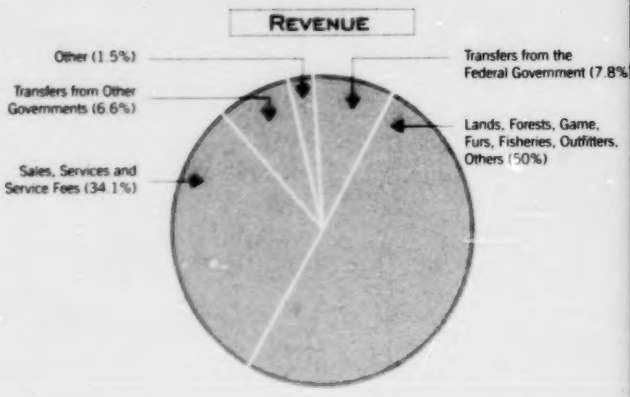
Revenue
Other (1.5%)
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Transfers from Other Governments (6.6%)
Lands, Forests, Game, Furs, Fisheries, Outfitters, Others (50%)
Sales, Services and Service Fees (34.1%)

Expenditures 2000-01

Period Ending March 31, 2001 (in $000's)

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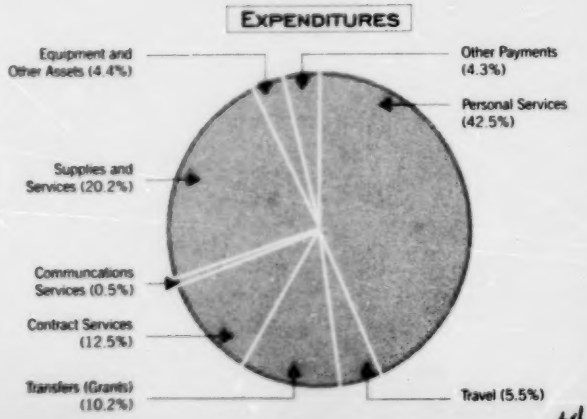
Totals	$53,294	$6,839	$12,848	$15,614	$576	$25,318	$5,490	$5,377	$125,356	$116,924	$8,432



RESOURCE PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT REVOLVING FUND

PROVIDES RESOURCE PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES.

Unaudited Statement of Operations and Accumulated Operating Deficit — Year Ended March 31, 2001

		2000-01 Budget	2000-01 Actual	1999-00 Actual
Revenues:				
	Spruce budworm	-	2,632	1,887,928
	Radio communications	1,404,000	1,643,422	1,458,914
	Equipment rental and recoveries	223,133	216,385	246,866
	Staff Housing	132,790	137,333	111,432
	Northern Air Operations	110,000	75,331	46,022
	Grants from Government of Canada	-	-	-
	Other	-	223	30,303
Total Revenues		$1,870,923	$2,075,326	$3,781,465
Expenses:				
	Salaries	920,454	888,201	964,566
	Contractual services	258,157	440,404	2,175,492
	Labour, travel and sustenance	55,000	36,345	72,641
	Amortization	336,179	329,501	309,146
	Materials and supplies	184,500	439,498	274,402
	General and administrative	116,633	63	666
Total Expenditure		$1,870,923	$2,134,012	$3,796,913
Gain (Loss) from Operations		-	(58,686)	(15,448)
	Subsidy from General Revenue Fund	-	-	-
	Transfers/Recovery from Revolving Funds	-	-	(95,307)
Net Income (Loss)		-	(58,686)	(110,755)
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit) - beginning of year		184,552	184,552	295,307
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit) - end of year		$184,552	$125,866	$184,552

FISH AND WILDLIFE DEVELOPMENT FUND

WAS ESTABLISHED TO PREVENT THE REDUCTION OF WILDLIFE HABITAT AND WILDLIFE POPULATIONS IN SASKATCHEWAN'S AGRICULTURAL AREAS AND FOR FISH ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS INTENDED TO PREVENT THE LOSS OF FISH OR FISH HABITAT. THE FISH AND WILDLIFE DEVELOPMENT FUND NOW MANAGES OVER 78,281 HECTARES OF HABITAT IMPORTANT TO WILDLIFE.

Unaudited Statement of Revenue, Expenditure and Restricted/Unrestricted Net Assets — Year Ended March 31, 2001

		2000-01 Budget	2000-01 Actual	1999-00 Actual
Revenues:				
	General Revenue Fund	3,060,000	3,340,645	2,895,266
	Interest	200,000	209,834	168,062
	Field Permits and leases	157,000	167,394	151,205
	Other revenue	10,000	42,618	26,647
Total Revenue		$3,427,000	$3,760,491	$3,241,180
Expenses:				
	Wildlife habitat projects	1,090,000	1,024,991	1,028,006
	Fish enhancement projects	1,433,000	963,603	845,466
	Grants-in-lieu of taxes	210,000	213,763	202,041
Total Expenditure		$2,733,000	$2,202,357	$2,075,513
Net Income (Loss)		$694,000	$1,558,134	$1,165,667
Restricted and Unrestricted Net Assets- beginning of year		$3,714,497	$3,714,497	$3,471,613
Restricted and Unrestricted Net Assets - end of year		$3,714,497	$4,299,163	$3,714,497

COMMERCIAL REVOLVING FUND

CONDUCTS COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY REQUIRED FOR THE PROMOTION, DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF PROVINCIAL PARKS.

Unaudited Statement of Operations and Accumulated Operating Deficit — Year Ended March 31, 2001

		2000-01 Budget	2000-01 Actual	1999-00 Actual
Revenues:				
	Campground	3,346,000	3,550,072	3,427,837
	Cottage lots/permits	1,530,000	1,515,537	1,511,711
	Park entry	1,711,000	1,766,526	1,420,021
	Commercial leases	598,000	452,783	445,466
	Surface leases	407,000	542,478	543,388
	Other revenue	385,000	369,939	355,856
	Accommodation	228,000	289,272	276,651
	Hay & grazing fees	201,000	155,587	147,738
	Swimming pool fees	159,000	147,784	140,373
Total Revenues		$8,565,000	$8,789,978	$8,269,041
Expenses:				
	Wages	8,700,000	8,813,415	8,651,721
	Material, supplies & freight	1,200,000	1,200,250	1,394,737
	Repairs & maintenance	850,000	737,384	645,328
	Utilities	800,000	681,999	640,406
	Vehicle rentals	670,000	739,165	664,170
	Amortization	240,000	278,517	221,376
	Other expenses	316,000	489,499	393,164
	Postage & communications	278,000	330,266	267,802
	Equipment rentals	210,000	210,613	193,522
	Publicity & advertising	235,000	201,397	184,277
	Travel & sustenance	200,000	193,200	203,112
Total Expenditure		$13,699,000	$13,875,705	$13,459,615
Gain (Loss) from Operations		($5,134,000)	(5,085,727)	(5,190,574)
	Subsidy from General Revenue Fund	5,134,000	5,189,000	4,847,000
Net Income/(Loss)		-	103,273	(343,574)
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit) - beginning of year		6,259	6,258	841,833
	Transfers/Recovery from Revolving Fund			(492,000)
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit) - end of year		$6,259	109,531	$6,259

Appendix A - Guiding Principles

SERM carries out its mandated responsibilities using the following principles:

Ecosystem Approach
Ecosystems consist of communities of humans, animals, plants, and micro-organisms, interacting with each other and with the non-living elements of their environment. Environmental protection and resource management should be based on an ecosystem approach, recognizing that all components in an ecosystem are closely linked and cannot be managed in isolation from one another. Sustainable development approaches should simultaneously consider impacts to each environmental medium (air, land and water) to avoid the transfer of risk from one environmental medium to another.

Prevention
Sustainable development approaches should emphasize the principle that it is better to "anticipate and prevent" environmental and resource degradation rather than "react and cure" the problem once it has occurred.

Risk Assessment
SERM will first assess the risk of an environmental or natural renewable resource management issue to human health, the integrity and health of the ecosystem, and socio-economic impacts, before taking action and or allocating resources to address the issue.

Precaution
When faced with uncertainty about whether or not a negative environmental impact will occur, it is preferable to take a precautionary approach that preserves the environmental status quo, especially if the cost of the impact would be high.

Shared Responsibility
Sustainable development approaches require the commitment and participation of all societal groups (First Nations, industry, governments, education institutions, non-government organizations and individuals). Cooperation will foster a smoother transition to sustainability than would independent action.

Integration
The environment cannot be dealt with in isolation. It must be protected and managed in a systematic way by being fully integrated into all aspects of the economy and society, including business, government and individual decision-making.

Stewardship
Sustainable development approaches should be considered for their long-term benefits. Up front costs should not be viewed as unrecoverable expenses but as investments with a clear pay-back over the long term. We should also recognize that our world and its resources are not solely the possession of our generation. We must consider the needs of future generations and leave them an undamaged environment.

Full Information on Costs
The prices we pay for goods and services generally do not include 'externalities' such as the environmental damage or costs associated with production and use. Information about environmental costs should be made available so that sound decisions can be made in the marketplace.

APPENDIX B - LEGISLATION ADMINISTERED

The Clean Air Act protects Saskatchewan's air quality by regulating emissions which originate in the province.

The Conservation Easements Act encourages private landowners, conservation organizations and governments to protect ecologically sensitive lands and natural areas through voluntary agreements.

The Ecological Reserves Act protects unique, natural ecosystems and landscape features through the designation of Crown land as ecological reserves.

The Environmental Assessment Act provides a mechanism for requiring and undertaking impact assessment and evaluation. Ministerial approval is required before a proponent may proceed with a development, and terms and conditions may be imposed on the approval to mitigate impacts.

The Environmental Management and Protection Act protects the air, land and water resources of the province through regulating and controlling potentially harmful activities and substances.

The Fisheries Act (Saskatchewan), 1994 enables sustainable management of fisheries resources by affirming provincial ownership of fish, creating a provincial licensing system, and regulating allocation of fish resources, fish marketing, aquaculture, sport fishing and commercial fishing.

The Forest Resources Management Act allows the department to implement a new framework for sustainably managing Saskatchewan's forest resources.

The Grasslands National Park Act ratifies and validates the Grasslands National Park Agreement and allows the province to transfer land to the federal government for inclusion in the Grasslands National Park.

The Litter Control Act makes littering an offence and provides for the establishment and administration of a deposit refund system for various beverage containers.

The Natural Resources Act establishes the province's mandate to manage, protect, conserve and develop renewable resources in a sustainable manner.

The Ozone-Depleting Substances Control Act, 1993 protects the upper atmospheric ozone layer by banning the use and manufacture of ozone-depleting substances.

The Parks Act, 1997 provides authority for the management, administration and disposition of park land and park land reserves.

The Prairie and Forest Fires Act, 1982 provides for the prevention, detection and suppression of prairie and forest fires originating in provincial forests, parks and on unoccupied Crown lands. It also governs compensation for conscripted fire fighters and authorizes establishment and regulation of fire bans and burning permit areas.

The Provincial Lands Act creates authority for the management and transfer of Crown lands.

The Regional Parks Act, 1979 allows the Minister to assist local governments and agencies in establishing regional parks and agencies to increase availability of parks to the public.

The Sale or Lease of Certain Lands Act gives Cabinet the ability to place conditions on the transfer or lease of lands listed in a schedule to this Act.

The State of the Environment Report Act provides for public accountability in reporting of environmental conditions and activities through the preparation and release of a State of the Environment Report every two years.

The Water Appeal Board Act establishes the Water Appeal Board and enables the board to hear appeals regarding water, sewage and drainage issues.

The Wildlife Act, 1998 provides for the management, conservation and protection of wildlife resources through the issuance and revocation of licences, the prosecution of wildlife offenses and the establishment of annual hunting seasons.

The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act provides for the management, conservation and protection of wildlife lands and wildlife by preventing the sale and alteration of certain Crown lands.

Appendix C - Primary Partners & Stakeholders

Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management has hundreds of partners and stakeholders at the local, regional and provincial levels. The following organizations and companies are provincial in scope, have a significant impact on the environment and natural resources, are involved in major current issues, and/or maintain a long-term relationship with the department.

- Association of Saskatchewan Urban Park and Conservation Agencies
- Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
- Cameco
- Canadian Bankers' Association
- Canadian Forest Service
- Canadian Heritage River System Board
- Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
- Canadian Petroleum Products Institute
- Canadian Plains Research Center
- Cigar Lake Mining
- Cogema Resources Inc.
- Council of Saskatchewan Forest Industries Inc.
- Consumer's Co-operative/New Grade Upgrader
- Crop Protection Institute of Canada
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Ecotourism Society
- Enbridge Inc.
- Environment Canada
- Farm Woodlot Association of Saskatchewan
- Federal/Provincial Park Council
- Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations
- Husky Oil
- Interprovincial Pipeline
- IPSCO
- Kalium Canada
- L & M Wood Products Limited
- Meadow Lake Tribal Council
- Métis Nation of Saskatchewan (MNS) and MNS Regions
- Millar Western Industries Ltd.
- Mistik Management Ltd.
- Museums Association of Saskatchewan (MAS)
- Nature Conservancy of Canada (Saskatchewan Division)
- Nature Saskatchewan
- NorSask Forest Products Ltd.
- Parks Canada
- Prince Albert Grand Council
- Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan (PARCS)
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF)
- Saskatchewan Action Foundation for the Environment
- Saskatchewan Archaeological Society
- Saskatchewan Association of Automotive Repairers
- Saskatchewan Association of Firearm Education (SAFE)
- Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres (SARC)
- Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM)
- Saskatchewan Commercial Fishermen's Cooperative Federation Ltd.
- Saskatchewan Dutch Elm Disease Association
- Saskatchewan Eco-Network
- Saskatchewan Energy Corporation
- Saskatchewan Environment and Industry Managers Association
- Saskatchewan Environmental Society
- Saskatchewan Forestry Association
- Saskatchewan Government Employees Union
- Saskatchewan Independent Forest Industries
- Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC)
- Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology
- Saskatchewan Mining Association
- Saskatchewan Outfitters Association
- Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA)
- Saskatchewan Potash Producers' Association
- Saskatchewan Provincial Parks Cottage Owners Association
- Saskatchewan Power Corporation
- Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association (SRPA)
- Saskatchewan Research Council
- Saskatchewan Ski Association
- Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association
- Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association
- Saskatchewan Trappers Association
- Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA)
- Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council
- Saskatchewan Water and Wastewater Association
- Saskatchewan Water Corporation
- Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation
- Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
- Saskatchewan Wild Rice Council
- Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation
- SaskFerco Products Inc.
- SaskTip, Inc.
- Sterling Pulp Chemicals
- TransCanada Trail Council
- Treaty Four Governance Group
- Tribal Councils
- Tourism Saskatchewan
- University of Regina
- University of Saskatchewan
- Weyerhaeuser Canada Ltd., Saskatchewan Division
- World Wildlife Fund

SERM's Sphere of Responsibility

- Resources managed and programs delivered provide $1.2 billion in economic activity, involving 17,000 direct and indirect jobs in the province.
- Crown lands managed account for almost 37.7 million hectares (58 per cent of the total provincial land base), including 35.5 million hectares of forest lands of which some 12.2 million hectares are under commercial development.
- Saskatchewan has 15 ecological reserves and a provincial parks system (34 provincial parks, 137 recreation sites, 23 protected areas and eight historical sites) that provide services to approximately 2.4 million visitors every year.
- The province has 523 species of animals (418 bird, 86 mammal, seven amphibian, and 12 reptile); 86 species of fish in more than 50,000 waterbodies; 1,978 species of plants (1,517 dicots, 11 gymnosperms, 636 monocots and 87 pteridophytes) and an estimated 20,000 species of insects.
- Eighty-five per cent of Saskatchewan residents over the age of 15 (the third highest rate in Canada) participate in nature-related recreational activities, including hiking, camping and photography. The provincial angling and hunting sectors have approximately 250,000 active participants.
- Wildlife hunting and viewing generates over $82.6 million in annual economic activity, supporting over 7,900 direct and indirect jobs. Total revenue to the government from non-resident big game hunting licence sales exceeded $1.6 million; direct provincial revenue from the sale of hunting and trapping licences was $6.6 million; 73,000 people purchased 190,000 licences to hunt and trap in 2000-01.
- A majority of non-resident anglers and all non-resident big game hunters use the services of Saskatchewan's 609 outfitters. In one year, the outfitting industry generates $100 million in direct revenues and an additional $20 million in related expenditures, primarily in rural and small communities. They provide approximately 1,000 person years of direct employment while attracting more than 20,000 out-of-province visitors.
- Fishing creates almost $270 million in annual economic activity; total provincial angling license revenue is $4.7 million of which $890,000 was attributed to non-resident angling licence sales. Nearly 185,000 licensed anglers caught approximately 10 million fish, keeping 3.5 million (with an approximate total weight of 2.6 million kilograms). There were an estimated 40,000 anglers under the age of 16; 1,752 commercial bait, brine and net fishers harvest 4.1 million kilograms of fish per year.

Benefits

The quality of the environment, the strength of the economy and the health of Saskatchewan people are interdependent. SERM's work to protect and manage our province's natural environment contributes to Saskatchewan residents':

- **Health** - clean water to drink, clean air to breathe and clean, healthy land to support us. By protecting threatened and vulnerable habitat in Saskatchewan, SERM helps to maintain biodiversity - the variety of life on Earth.
- **Economy** - renewable resources (forestry, wildlife, fisheries, etc.) provide employment to thousands of Saskatchewan citizens and contribute more than a billion dollars a year to our economy:
  - New forestry initiatives in northern Saskatchewan will create 10,000 jobs by the year 2005 and further expand business opportunities.
  - Saskatchewan's environmental industries are growing at more than twice the rate of the provincial economy.
  - SERM's ecosystem management approach creates opportunities for natural resource-based industries (e.g. oil and gas, mining) through programs that minimize negative environmental impacts.
- **Society** - The health and beauty of Saskatchewan's natural environment contributes to our physical and mental well-being. Our province's history and economy are intimately linked to the land and nature.

SERM welcomes your questions and comments. Please contact us: phone 787-2700 (Regina), 1-800-567-4224 (toll-free); 3211 Albert Street, Regina SK S4S 5W6; email *inquiry@serm.gov.sk.ca*.